

(3)
*The Nature and Extent of CHRIST's
Church, consider'd.* 84

A
S E R M O N

Preached at
PETERSFIELD,
IN THE
COUNTY of *Southampton,*
February 13. 1721-2.

At the Opening of a *Meeting-House*, lately
Erected by the PROTESTANT DISSENTERS
of that Town.

*Publiss'd at the Request of the MINISTERS and
PEOPLE who heard it.*

By JOHN NORMAN,
of *Portsmouth.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN CLARK, at the Bible and
Crown in the Poultry, near Cheapside: And
may also be had of G. EVERDEN, Bookseller in
Portsmouth. M.DCC.XXII.

(Price Six-Pence.)

John Martin and Partner of Christ's
Church, witnesses.

A
S E R M O N

PREACHED
IN THE
COUNTY OF Southampton
February 1712.

At the Opening of a New Church, lately
erected by the Parsonage of the
County of Southampton.

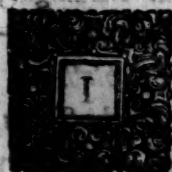
By the Rev. Mr. John Martin,
Pastor of the Church.

JOHN MARTIN,
of Southampton.

Printed and Sold by
J. Smith, at the Sign of the Bible and
Crown, in the Strand, near St. Dunstons Church.
1712.



THE PREFACE.



Have suffer'd this Discourse to go out of my Hands, to oblige the Ministers and People, by whom I was, in the most pressing Manner, solicited to make it publick.

My Compliance with a Request so earnestly repeated, will let my Brethren and Friends see what a Regard I have to their Judgment; and, at the same time, give me an Opportunity of acquainting the World, what Doctrine was preached, to an Auditory, whose assembling (though by Liberty from, and under the Protection of our wise and good Government) was thought sufficient, by a great many, to justify the rudest and most unmannerly Carriages, that I was ever a Witness to.

Some Protestant Dissenters in Petersfield, having long wish'd for an Opportunity of serving God in a Way which appear'd to them to be the

best, lately erected a very decent Place for Religious Worship; which was opened on Tuesday, Feb. 13. 1721, by several Ministers, who, by Invitation, met on that Occasion.

The Services of the Day were perform'd with great Order and Solemnity, and, I believe, to the Satisfaction of all that were present: But great was the Spite without doors. Several Methods were taken to disturb the Congregation in the time of Worship. When the Assembly was dismiss'd, the Ministers and People were saluted with the Civilities of a clamorous and insulting Mob, and the Street rang, even at Midnight, with such noisy Railery and Invective, as civiliz'd Pagans would have been ready to blush at.

Indeed, some of the Inhabitants of the Town, who are of the Church of England, were very handsome in their Behaviour, and several (as we were inform'd) resented the unchristian and ungenteel Usage, which we met with from their Neighbours; and we persuade ourselves, that when they know the Dissenters better, they will be more convinc'd, that we did not deserve such Treatment.

If the Discourse which is now publish'd, may have a Tendency to dispossess any of their unreasonable Prejudices, and to promote Charity, Love, and Peace among Christians, I shall have my End.



EPHES. I. 22, 23.

—The Church, which is his
Body—



Am fully persuaded, that the deplorable *Contentions* which have, for so many Ages, disturb'd the Christian World, to the Dishonour of God, the Grief of all the sincere Lovers of Peace and Holiness, and the Prejudice of Christ's Interest and Kingdom, have been very much owing to mistaken Notions about the *Church*, and particularly to Mens *confining* it to the several Parties with which they have been engaged, to the Exclusion of all that have not been able entirely to give in to their Sentiments.

There were some, when Christianity was in its Infancy, who uncharitably maintained, That if Persons were not *circumcis'd* after the Acts xv. i. manner of Moses, they could not be saved.

This

The Nature and Extent

This caused such great Uneasiness and Disputes among the Brethren, that *Paul* and *Barnabas* found it expedient to take a Journey from *Antioch* to *Jerusalem*, to consult with the Apostles and Elders about the Question, and to prevent the ill Consequences that were like to arise from it.

The *Donatists*, in the fourth Century, affirmed their Party to be the *one Holy Catholick Church* *; and, in defiance of that extensive Charity which the Gospel so earnestly recommends, declared all the rest of the World to be cut off from the Body of Christ.

The Zealots of the Church of *Rome* have thought it no Dishonour to follow these scandalous Examples, and to anathematize, and, in consequence of that, to persecute, imprison, burn, and destroy, such as, for Conscience-sake, have separated from their Communion. And (I am sorry that I should have Occasion to say it) too many, among *Protestants* themselves (and perhaps *some* of all Denominations) have countenanced, more than they ought to have done, that Schismatical Principle, by their Forwardness to condemn one another on the account of things, in which the Essence of Religion is not the least concerned.

* *Ecclesiam dixerunt nullibi esse quam in Africa, & quidem tantum esse in parte Donati. Augustinus apud Cent. Magdeburg. vol. 1. Cent. 4. p. 210.*

There

There are too many who are for *monopolizing* the Privileges of the Gospel, and will hardly allow that any have a Right to them but themselves, and those of their own Way. Their Mouths are full of damnatory Sentences against such as differ from them; and, as far as it is in their power to do it, they exclude them, not only from the Church on Earth, but shut the Gates of the Kingdom of Heaven against them too. This Usage grieves some, and very much exasperates others; and by this, Feuds and Animosities are kept up among Christians, and Peoples Spirits are so irritated, and such a Foundation is laid for Anger, Envy, Jealousies, and Discontents, that instead of living together as Brethren, they too often behave more like Strangers and Enemies. *This Uncharitableness and Ill Opinion of all different Parties, only gathers the Fuel together* (as the Learned *Stillingsfleet* expresses it) *and prepares combustible Matter, which wants nothing but the clashing of an adverse Party, acted upon Principles of a like nature, to make it break out into an open Flame* *.

It may therefore be of good Use (and I hope it will) to enquire into the *Nature* and *Extent* of that *Church*, concerning which there has been so much Controversy, and out of which contending Parties have been so

* *Irenicum*, Pref. p. 5.

The Nature and Extent

long endeavouring to exclude one another : and with this View I have made choice of the Words which were just now read, to be the Subject of my Discourse.

What relation the Text has to the preceding Part of the Chapter, you will easily see, if you take notice of the Scope and Design of it. In some of the foregoing Verses, the Apostle speaks of the high Honour and Dignity which God the Father conferred on his Son, when he raised him from the Dead :

ver. 21, 22. *He set him (it is said) at his own Right-Hand, far above all Principality and Power, and every Name that is named, not only in this World, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his Feet.* Our Redeemer having fully satisfied Divine Justice, and perform'd, by his active and passive Obedience, all that the Father required of him ; the Bands of Death, which, for some time, detain'd him in the Grave, were broken ; the Almighty Captive was set at liberty, and honour'd with the brightest Crown, and most dazzling Throne in Heaven, where he sways the universal Scepter, and manages the Affairs of both Worlds with an uncontroll'd Authority, none daring to say unto him, What dost thou ? To him the whole Creation is in Subjection ; but there is one particular Part of it, which he is in a more peculiar Manner the Head of, and that is the Church. And
gave

gave him to be Head over all Things to the Church, which is his Body.

The Words present us with an Argument, which is as copious, as it is noble and sublime; and had I time to take in the Compass and Extent of it, a vast Variety of useful and important Truths would offer themselves to our Consideration. As an Introduction to what I particularly design; I might mention to you the Derivation and various Acceptations of the *Greek Word*, ἐκκλησία, and take notice of the several Distinctions under which the *Church* has been treated of. As, for instance; that it is either *Militant* or *Triumphant*; *Representing*, or *Represented*; *Universal*, or *Particular*; *Visible*, or *Invisible*, &c. But my Intention, at present, being to speak of the *Church* as a Society so nearly related to *Jesus Christ*, as to be called *his Body*; I shall confine my Discourse to the following Heads.

- I. I shall enquire what that *Church* is, which the Apostle speaks of in the Text, under the Character of the *Body* of Christ.
- II. Consider the *Relation* which that Character suggests; and shew the Reasons and Foundation of it. And,
- III. Make such an Improvement of what shall be offer'd under these Heads, as may render my Discourse the more useful.

The Nature and Extent

I. I am to enquire what that *Church* is, which we find spoken of by the Apostle under the Character of the *Body of Christ*: And here give me leave to present you with such Descriptions of it, as have been given by some celebrated Writers, and most of them of the *Church of England*; and let Dr. *Field* be heard first. “The *Church* (saith he) is the
 “ Multitude and Number of those whom
 “ Almighty God severeth from the rest of the
 “ World, by the Work of his Grace, and
 “ calleth to the Participation of Eternal Happiness, by the Knowledge of such supernatural Verities, as, concerning their Everlasting Good, he hath revealed in Christ
 “ his Son, and such other happy Means as
 “ he hath appointed to further and set forward the Work of their Salvation*.” Let us next hear that great Divine Dr. *Barrow*, who tells us, that “the *whole Body of God’s*
 “ People, that is, ever hath been, or ever
 “ shall be, from the beginning of the World,
 “ to the Consummation thereof, who having
 “ formally, or virtually believed in Christ,
 “ and sincerely obeyed God’s Laws, shall
 “ finally, by the meritorious Performances
 “ and Sufferings of Christ, be saved, is called
 “ the *Church*†.” And again: “To the Catholic
 “ Society of true Christians, through-

* *Field of the Church*, p. 11.

† *Discourse of Church Unity*.

of Christ's Church, consider'd.

11

“ out all Ages, dispers'd throughout all
“ Countries, whereof Part doth sojourn in
“ Earth, Part doth reside in Heaven, Part
“ whereof is described in the Register of
“ Divine Pre-ordination, and shall be recol-
“ lected at the Resurrection of the Just; to
“ this Church especially, all the glorious
“ Titles, and excellent Privileges attributed
“ to the Church in Holy Scripture do agree.
“ —This is the *Body of Christ*, whereof he is
“ the *Head* and Saviour*.” My Lord of *Hereford* (late Bishop of *Bangor*) describing the
Church of Christ, expresses himself to the
same Purpose, though in very different Words:
“ It is (saith he) the Number of Men, whe-
“ ther small or great, whether dispers'd or
“ united, who truly and sincerely are Sub-
“ jects to Jesus Christ alone, as their Law-
“ giver and Judge in Matters relating to the
“ Favour of God and their Eternal Salvation†.
Excellent Mr. *Corbet* delivers himself thus, *viz.*
“ The Church is a Society of regenerate Per-
“ sons, joined to Christ as their Head, and
“ to one another as Fellow-Members, by a
“ Mystical Union, through the Holy Ghost
“ residing in them all; and through Faith
“ unfeigned towards God in Christ, and ho-
“ ly Love towards one another, justified,

* *Discourse of Church Unity.*

† *Sermon preach'd before the King, March 31. 1717.*
p. 17.

The Nature and Extent

“sanctified, and adopted to the Inheritance
 “of Eternal Glory §.” All which Descriptions agree with that of the *Assembly of Divines*, viz. “The Catholick, or Universal
 “Church, consists of the whole Number of
 “the Elect that have been, are, and shall be
 “gathered into one, under Christ the Head
 “thereof, and is the Spouse, the *Body*, the
 “*Fulness of him who filleth all in all**.” From which Descriptions of the Church, and the Account which the Scriptures give of it; I undertake to demonstrate and defend this Proposition, viz.

That *all* true and sincere Christians, in what Part of the World soever they live, whatever Denomination they go under, and how much soever they may differ in the Circumstantials of Religion, and Modes of Worship, are Members of that Church which is Christ's *Mystical Body*; but *none* else.

The Proposition, you see, consists of two Parts, and both of them being of Importance, they will deserve a distinct Consideration.

I. I advance, and shall endeavour to maintain, that *all* true and sincere Christians are

§ Corbet's *Remains*, p. 6.

* *Assembly's Confession of Faith*.

Members of that Church which is Christ's *Mystical Body*. By *true* and *sincere* Christians, I mean such as believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, with a Faith unfeigned; who assent to those Divine Truths which this great Prophet, by Commission from his Father, published to the World; submit to, and sincerely obey him as their Lawgiver and King, and depend on his Merits and Intercession alone for the Pardon of their Sins, Acceptance with God, and Eternal Life. Such are true Christians; and such, whatever Difference there may be in their Opinions and Modes of Worship, are Members of Christ's *Mystical Body*.

All the Saints that lived in the past Ages of the World, and are now in a State of Glory and Triumph, are of this blessed Society: so are *all* the real Christians which are alive now, and so will *all* those be, who shall live in the Generations to come, to the End of Time.

Christ's *Flock* is indeed, in comparison, but Luke xii. a *little* one; but, Thanks be to God, it is not ³² confined within such narrow Limits, as some People, who have a very scanty Charity, and are under the Power and Influence of Party-Prejudices, would represent it to be. The Extent of it, I am sure, is no less than my Proposition suggests: and if Persons would read the Scriptures with Care and Impartiality, and consider the many gross Absurdities which would be the Consequence of their denying

denying what I have advanced under this Head, they could not but own the Truth which I am pleading for.

We are told in the New Testament, that
 Acts xiii. 39. *all that believe are justified; that as many as*
 John i. 12. *receive him, to them gave he Power to become the*
Sons of God, even to them that believe on his
 Chap. iii. 16. *Name. God so loved the World (saith our Sa-*
viour) that he gave his only-begotten Son, that
whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but
have everlasting Life. And in another Place,
 Chap. v. 24. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my*
Word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath
everlasting Life, and shall not come into Condem-
nation, but is passed from Death to Life. Now
if true Christians of all Denominations are not
of the Church which is Christ's Body, it would
follow that some may be justified and pardoned,
adopted and saved, who are not united to the
Lord Jesus, or Members of his Mystical Body;
which is expressly contrary to a great many
plain Texts of Scripture, and particularly to
 John xv. 6. *the Words of our Saviour, If a Man abide not*
in me, he is cast forth as a Branch.

Moreover, all true Believers, we know, derive spiritual and vital Influences from Christ, (else they could not be sincere Believers) and therefore they must be Members of his *Mystical Body*, because without Union with Christ, there could not be a Participation of that Grace to which that Divine Life is owing,

owing, which distinguishes the Faithful from the rest of the World.

Whatever Societies therefore Men belong to, or by whatever Denomination they are known and distinguish'd; whether they were Partakers of the initiating Ordinance of the Gospel, in their *Infancy*, or not before they were in the Number of *adult* Believers; whether they worship God according to the Method which the *Laws* of their several Countries have established, or in *dissenting* Assemblies; whether they *pray* by a *Form*, or *without* one; *kneel* in receiving the Lord's Supper, or think a *Table Gesture* more suitable to that holy Feast, and more agreeable to the first Institution of it; whether they approve the *Prelatical* Form of *Church-Government*, or think the *Presbyterian* or *Congregational* Models more eligible; or whatever other Differences there may be among them, if they are *sincere* Christians, they are undoubtedly Members of that *Church* which is Christ's *Mystical Body*; that Church which our blessed Saviour has redeemed with his Blood, protects by his special Providence, replenishes with his Gifts and Graces, and will at last present to his Father, *without Spot or Wrinkle, or any such* Ephes. v. 27.
thing.

The first Part of the Proposition being thus established and confirmed, I proceed to the second, *viz.*

2. To

The Nature and Extent

2. To make it appear that *none* but *sincere* Christians belong to the Church, considered as *Christ's Mystical Body*.

Members of the *visible* Church, I own, *Hypocrites* and *Wicked* Persons may be: for if a Man openly owns the Doctrine of the Gospel, professes Faith in Jesus Christ, and was admitted by Baptism, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, into the Society of Christians, though he be a Stranger to a Work of Grace, and in his Heart an Enemy to God and Holiness, yet he is reckoned to belong to the *visible* Church, notwithstanding this. Our blessed Saviour represents the *Kingdom of Heaven*, or the *visible* Church, as like a *Field*, in which *Wheat* and

Matt.xiii. *Tares* grow together until the Harvest; intimating thereby, that among such as make a Profession of Religion, there will be a Mixture of *Good* and *Bad*, to the End of the World, when a perfect and final Separation will be made, and it will be easily and fully known who are *sincere*, and who are *Hypocrites*. I conclude therefore (with learned Bishop Pearson*) "That within the Church, in the public Profession and *External* Communion thereof, are contained Persons *truly good* and *sanctified*, and hereafter *saved*; and together with them, other Persons, *void*

* *Exposition of the Creed*, 5th Edit. p. 344.

" of all *saving Grace*, and hereafter to be
 " *damned*. And with judicious *Hooker*, " That
 " of the *visible* Body and Church of *Jesus*
 " *Christ*, those may be, and oftentimes are, in
 " respect of the main Parts of their *outward*
 " Profession, who in regard of their *inward*
 " Disposition of Mind, yea of external Con-
 " versation, yea even of some Parts of their
 " Profession, are most worthily both *hateful*
 " in the sight of God himself, and in the
 " Eyes of the *sounder* Parts of the *visible*
 " Church most *execrable* *."

But though *wicked Men* and *Hypocrites* may
 be, and many such are Members of the *visible*
 Church, it is most evident that they cannot
 belong to the Church which is *Christ's Mysti-*
cal Body. In a Parable of our Saviour's,
 which I had occasion to take notice of before,
 the *Tares* which sprang up and grew among
 the *Wheat*, (*i. e.* the *insincere* Professors of Re-
 ligion, who are in the *visible* Church with
 the *Faithful*) are said to be sown by an *Enemy*, *Matt. xiii.*
 that is, the *Devil*. Now (as a celebrated 39.
 Commentator of the *Church of England* argues)
 " Is it reasonable to conceive that the *Devil*,
 " the great *Enemy* of the *Church* and of its
 " *Head*, should beget Members of this Church;
 " since there is no Communion betwixt *Christ*, *Cor. vi.*
 " and *Belial*? or that the *Devil's Children* 15.

* *Ecclesiastical Polity*, 1st Edit. p. 84.

“ should be *Members of Christ's Body**?” Moreover, we learn from the Apostle, that there is
 Ephes. iv. *one Body* (*viz.* the Church) and *one Spirit* which
 4. animates the whole Body; and that *if any*
 Rom. viii. *Man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of*
 9. *his.* “ It therefore must be owned (saith the
 “ learned Doctor, whose Words I had occa-
 “ sion to mention just before) as a certain
 “ Truth, that nothing can unite us to that
 “ Church and Body, of which Christ Jesus is
 “ the Head, but the Participation of the Spi-
 “ rit †”. Which Spirit (our Saviour has told
 us) *the World cannot receive, because it seeth him*
 John xiv. *not, neither knoweth him.* Again,
 17.

The Church is frequently mentioned, in
 the New Testament, under the Image of
 1 Cor. iii. *God's House and Building.* The spiritual Struc-
 9. ture is raised and finished by himself. The
 1 Pet. ii. Materials are call'd *lively Stones*; the Founda-
 5. tion on which this Building stands, is a *Rock.*
 Matt. xvi. Jesus Christ is call'd the *chief Corner-Stone*, in
 18. Ephes. ii. *whom all the Building fitly framed together, grow-*
 20, 21. *eth unto an holy Temple in the Lord.* Against
 this Building *the Gates of Hell shall not prevail.*
 ver. 22. This is *an Habitation of God through the Spirit,*
 and in this he will dwell for ever. Now we
 can't suppose that *wicked Men* can belong to

* Dr. Whitby on Matt. xiii. 25.

† ————— on Ephes. iv. 4.

a Church which has all these Characters and Privileges.

To what has been said, give me leave to add, that *the Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, and that such as die in their Unbelief and Impenitency, shall be everlastingly excluded the Heavenly State, and sentenc'd to that *Lake which burns with Fire and Brimstone*. If Persons of this Character, then, can be the *real* and *living* Members of *Christ's Mystical Body*, it would follow, that the *Members* of Christ might be eternally separated from their *Head*, and perish for ever; the very mention of which is shocking.

There are a great many other Arguments to prove what I have been endeavouring to maintain; but I think both Parts of the Proposition before advanced, are sufficiently confirmed; so that it may, without Hesitation, be concluded, that all *true* and *sincere* Christians, and *none else*, are Members of that *Church* which is *Christ's Mystical Body*; which was the thing to be demonstrated. I now proceed,

II. To consider the *Relation* which the Character given to the Church in the Text suggests; and to shew the Reasons and Foundation of it: Now that *holy Company* which I have been speaking of, may, with great Propriety, be called the *Body* of Christ, on several Accounts. All the Faithful belong to our

The Nature and Extent

1 Pet. i.
18.

Lord Jesus Christ by right of *Purchase*, for as much as they were not redeemed with corruptible Things, as Silver and Gold, but with his own most precious Blood. And as he bought them at such a vast Expence, so being sensible that they are under infinite Obligations to him, they have made a hearty Surrender of themselves to their Saviour, and agreed, and solemnly covenanted, to be his devoted Servants now and for ever.

John vi.
46.

Besides, the Scriptures frequently mention a very intimate *Union* between Christ and Believers. He is not only (as an excellent Minister observes*) *Emmanuel, God with us*, but he is said to be *in us*, and we are said to be *in him*. In short, the Soul is not so closely united to the Natural Body, as Christ is to his *Body Mystical*: I say, not so closely, because the Union between the Soul and Body may be broken, but the Union between Christ and his Church, is everlasting, and the sacred Bonds of it can never be dissolv'd.

Moreover; the Church is a Society incorporated under Christ its glorious Head, and in that regard call'd his Body. A Company of People, you know, owning the Authority of a *Civil Governour*, and obliging themselves by *Oaths*, or other Securities, to be true and faithful to the Government under which they

* Shower's *Sac. Dis.* Part I. p. 4, 5.

have put themselves, is call'd a *Political Body*. Thus the whole Congregation of the Faithful throughout the World, having acknowledged Christ for their *Lord* and *King*, obliged themselves to be determined in all Cases by his Authority, to obey the Laws of his spiritual Kingdom, and to have an inviolable Regard to his Interest, are call'd *his Body*.

Once more ; Christ is the Source of the Church's Happiness and Life. This *holy Society* could never be supported without him, and on him it depends entirely. On such Accounts as these, the Church is spoken of under the Character of *Christ's Body* ; and the Things which I have hinted, are the Foundation of the *Relation* which that Character supposes.

I have now dispatch'd the two General Heads which I propos'd to speak to, and shall proceed,

III. To make such an Improvement of what has been offered, as may render my Discourse on this Subject the more useful. And,

1, From what has been delivered, it evidently follows, that the *Church* consider'd as *Christ's Mystical Body*, can have no other *Head*, and consequently no other *Law-giver* but himself. " As the *Head* gives Life to the *Body*,
" (saith a learned *Prelate*) as all Operations
" are first directed, and afterwards judged
" of

The Nature and Extent

“ of by the *Head* ; this Image strongly asserts
 “ the Right of *Legislation* and *Judgment* solely
 “ to *Christ*, who is the *Head*, and not to
 “ the *highest Officer* in his Church, who is not
 “ the *Head*, and therefore cannot assume to
 “ himself those Rights, without the Presump-
 “ tion of setting himself in the place of the
 “ *Head* *.”

What Power the Governours of *Kingdoms*, or *particular Churches* are invested with, is an Argument in which this *Corollary* is not concerned ; and I am so far from intending to speak any thing against that Authority, which by the Law of *Christ*, such have a Right to exercise, that nothing, which I have said, does in the least, relate to it.

The *Church*, you are sensible, which I am speaking of, is the *Body of Christ*, and you will easily allow that there can be no more Heads than *one*, to this *one Body* ; and therefore the *Right of Legislation* must be in this *one Head*. Besides, the *Church* which I have been describing, is *invisible* ; for it is known only to God himself, who are by Faith united to Jesus Christ, and have his Holy Spirit dwelling in them. These Things are out of the View of the wisest Men upon Earth, and discoverable by none but the Searcher of Hearts. And if

* *Bishop of Bangor's (now of Hereford) Answer to the Representation*, p. 73, 74.

no Man, or Body of Men, can say who are Members of the *invisible* Church, and who are not; no Man, or Body of Men, can pretend to any *Right of Legislation*, or *Judgment*, which shall affect this Catholick Church; nor can they make any Laws, on account of the Observance or Non-observance of which, they dare pretend, that Men shall either have an Interest in the Favour of Almighty God, and be saved, or forfeit that Favour, and perish.

2. From what has been said, we may learn wherein the *Unity* of the Church (considered as *Christ's Mystical Body*) really consists.

That this *Unity* ought not to be placed in Mens being, in *every thing*, of the very same *Opinion*, is a Concession, which, I suppose, will be made without any difficulty: For if our *Union* with the *Holy Catholick Church*, or with *Christ's Mystical Body*, should be said to depend on a perfect Agreement in Sentiments; this would be to make it depend on an *Impossibility*; because, as all Men did never yet in every thing think alike, so they never will: And while the Make of People's Minds is so different, and till they are equally capable of searching after Truth, have the same Helps in their Enquiries, the same Advantages for Improvement, and view every thing in the same Light; it is not *possible* that they should.

should*. So that the *Unity* of Christ's *Mystical Body* cannot consist in this.

Wherein then must we place it? Must it be in an Agreement of all the Members of the Church in the same Form of *Ecclesiastical Polity*, in their being *united* under one *visible Head*, or one *Episcopacy*; and worshipping God in the very same manner, with the very same *External Rites*, or according to one and the same *Act* of *Uniformity*? No; for this would make the *Unity* of Christ's *Mystical Body* depend on *Human Constitutions*, and the *Inventions* of mistaken and fallible Men; and to declare another *Center of Unity* besides Christ, which, methinks, none should presume to do.

Well, if this *Unity* does not lie in any of the aforementioned things, how shall we fix it, and in what? I answer; The *Unity* which I am speaking of, is a *Unity of the Spirit*: so the Apostle *Paul*, whose Notion of it was undoubtedly very just, calls it. Thus Eph. iv. 3. he exhorts the *Ephesian* Christians, to *keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace*: from

* *Consensus omnimodus planè impossibilis est. Tanta quippe est Ingeniorum Diversitas, tam varia Institutio, tam variae Dotes, tam varia rerum ipsarum, ut ita dicamus, latera, ut omnes idem de omnibus planè sentire fieri prorsus nequeat. Neque id verò unquam fuit inde ab Ecclesiæ Primordiis ad nostra usque tempora, neque unquam ad fine usque sæculorum videri poterit. Joh. Alph. Turretin. Nub. Testium, &c. in Dis. de Artic. Fundamentalibus. p. 31.*

which,

which, and the following Words, "it seems plain to me (says Dr. *Whitby*) that the Union of the Mystical Body of the Church Catholick consists in this; that they all have the *same Spirit* communicated to them from their Head, Christ Jesus. For the *whole Body* of Christians is here said to have *one Spirit*, and their *Unity* is stiled the *Unity of the Spirit*".

Should any suggest that, upon these Principles, Persons may throw off all Regard to that Order and Government, which ought to be maintain'd in *particular Churches*, and Societies of Christians, and that things would run into Disorder and Confusion: I desire it may be minded, that I am not speaking of the *Unity of particular Churches*, but of the *Unity of the Church Catholick*, or of Christ's *Mystical Body*; and therefore such an Insinuation is groundless. Though the *Unity* concerning which I am discoursing, be undoubtedly a *Unity of the Spirit* (as I have been shewing) there is no question to be made, but that all such as have the Spirit of Christ, will think themselves oblig'd to obey all his Laws; and therefore whatever Directions he has given, with regard to the Order and Government of *particular Churches*, they will (upon their being convinced that they are his Directions) readily observe and follow them: and if, at any time, in Matters of *Indifferency*,

D

and

and with respect to which, they have a right to use their Christian Liberty, they see Reasons to dissent from any of their Fellow-Christians; they will, notwithstanding this, be one with them in *Love* and *Affection*, and live in *Peace*: For the *Holy Spirit*, by which all the Members of Christ's Mystical Body are suppos'd to be influenc'd, will ever incline them to do so. You see then, that the Objection before-mention'd, is altogether without a Foundation.

The *Unity* of that Church, therefore, which is the Subject we have now under consideration, being a *Unity* of the Spirit, all such as have that *Unity*, are in *Unity* with this Church; but whatever *External Order*, *Peace* and *Concord* any one may maintain, who is not interested herein (*i. e.* in the *Unity* of the Spirit) "he is but like a Stone in a Building, laid, it may be, in a comely Order; but not cemented and fixed unto the whole, which renders its Station *useless* to the Building, and *unsafe* unto itself*.

3. From what has been said of the Church, consider'd as Christ's *Mystical Body*, it will evidently follow, that no Differences in the *External Rites* and *Modes* of Worship, can justify any, in charging their Fellow-Christians

* *Discourse concerning Evangelical Love, &c.* p. 99.

with such a *Schism* as cuts them off from the *Catholick Church*, and from *Christ the Head* of it.

There are some furious Men (as I observ'd in the beginning of this Discourse) who make no Scruple to pronounce all in a damnable State, that cannot satisfy themselves in worshipping God exactly as they do; tho, at the same time, they cannot but own, that the *Observances* which they lay so great a Stress on, are not of positive Divine Institution. But how unreasonable and uncharitable is this Zeal of theirs!

“ The *Ceremonies* (as one observes) are but
“ as the *Skin* to the *Body*. Now, suppose
“ (says he) that by some fretting Humour—
“ or the Application of a Caustick, or a Ve-
“ ficatory, &c. the *Skin* should be taken off
“ round the *Arm*; so that by the *Skin* it
“ holds no Communion with your *Body* as
“ your other Limbs do: Will you say that
“ your *Arm* is now no part of your *Body*,
“ but pass the Sentence of Excision upon it?
“ Are not the *Bone*, the *Muscles*, the *Tendons*,
“ the *Arteries*, and the *Veins*, sufficient to
“ constitute and prove its Union with the
“ *Body*, notwithstanding this Dissolution of
“ the Continuity of that which did but ex-
“ ternally clothe them? Why then are not
“ those Churches, or Societies of Christians,
“ which are united in the true Faith, and all

“ the *Essentials* of Christianity, equally re-
 “ lated to Christ, the Head, and to one ano-
 “ ther as Fellow-Members, tho they be ac-
 “ cidentally divided in *Ceremonies*, and *Exter-*
 “ *nal Forms* of outward visible Communion*.”

To leave the Church (in the Opinion of the Great Chillingworth) and to leave the *External* Communion of a Church, is not the same thing: That being done by ceasing to be a Member of it, by ceasing to have those Requisites which constitute a Man a Member of it, as *Faith* and *Repentance*: This, by refusing to communicate with a Church in her Liturgies, and publick Worship of God†.

4. If all sincere Believers are Members of Christ's *Mystical Body*, without doubt it must be a wicked thing to offer Violences of any kind to such.

Persecution has been too much practis'd in all Ages, and too many are guilty of it now. The Church of *Rome* is infamous for this; having made herself drunk with the Blood of the faithful Servants of the Lord Jesus, and been guilty, one way and another, of the Murder of many Hundred Thousands. But let her and her barbarous Sons know, that as often as they have dragoon'd, imprison'd,

* *Dissenters no Schismatics. A second Letter to Mr. Burseough, &c.* p. 115.

† Chillingworth's *Works*. Edit. 1704. p. 204.

and abused the Servants of God, they have been injuring the *Body* of Christ. Every time they have burnt a Martyr, they have burnt one of Christ's own *Members*; and let them remember, that when Inquisition shall be made for Blood, such Wickedness will not escape the Vengeance it deserves. I wish they may think of it; and if those among ourselves, who have too much given into such cruel and unchristian Measures, by the Severity with which they have been ready, as Occasion has offered, to treat their Fellow-Protestants for Dissenting from them, would lay it to heart, they would be humbled for, and ashamed of that which perhaps they may now think their Glory. The learned Dr. Barrow has told the World, that *whoever doth highly offend against Charity, maligning and mischieving his Brother, doth thereby separate himself from Christ's Body, and cease to be a Christian*.*.

I hope therefore, that a just Abhorrence of *Persecution* of all Kinds and Degrees, will be kept up, especially among *Protestants*.

5. From what has been delivered, we may infer, that there is a Time coming, when many will be owned by Christ, and admitted into the Kingdom of Heaven, who were not allowed, by their angry and censorious Brethren, to be of the Church on Earth; while

* *Discourse of Church-Unity.*

abundance who gloried in their Church-Membership, shall be eternally rejected.

The Hearts of Men are out of our reach, and the secret Springs of their Management and Actions are concealed from our View: so that we are not capable of judging who belong to Christ's Mystical Body, and who do not. But *the Lord knoweth them that are his*, and will in a little while discover to the whole World, who are *sincerely* religious, and who are but *pretendedly* so.

2 Tim. ii.
19.

How many are there who now build high on their being incorporated into such and such a Society of Christians, and place vast Confidence in those *External Privileges* to which they are entitled; to whom the Judge will say in the great Day of Account, *Depart from me, ye that work Iniquity?* While thousands, who have been cast out of the Church below, and left, in the Thoughts of their uncharitable Opposers, to the uncovenanted Mercy of God Almighty, shall be received by Christ as his own Members, and *shine* as so many *Suns in the Kingdom of their Father*.

Matt. vii.
23.

Matt. xiii.
43.

6. Do all that believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, love him in Sincerity, and subject themselves to his Authority and Government, belong to Christ's Mystical Body? From hence we may learn, what a glorious Company these will make, when they meet together in

in the Upper World, and compose one *general Assembly*. Heb. xii.
23.

While the Church is *Militant*, its Members are in a dispers'd State, parcell'd out into small Congregations; some in one Part of the World, and some in another; and a great Number of them are forced into Obscurity, and deny'd the Liberty of social and publick Worship. Now, when all the scatter'd Saints on Earth shall meet together, when the sincere Believers of all Christian Assemblies shall be collected into one Body; when all the Faithful of past Generations, and all that shall live in Ages yet to come, shall form one Society in the *New Jerusalem* above; when all their Imperfections shall for ever disappear, their Peevishness and Discontents, their Passions and Prejudices, their Differences, Misunderstandings, and Jealousies, shall be no more; when their Graces shall be made perfect, their Tempers entirely harmonious, and their Souls (as I may say) one; what a blessed Company will that be! When all God's People shall appear at once on that *Mount Zion*, and so many Millions join in an *Hallelujah*, what a Shout of Praise will be heard on that solemn and happy Occasion; and how will Heaven eccho with the Triumph of that glorious Day!

7. From what has been said, we may learn that it is the undoubted Duty of all Christians

istians to pay *due Honour* to *Christ* their *Head*; to be sincerely concerned for the *Welfare* of his *Church*, and to behave towards one another, as *Fellow-Members* of the same *Body Mystical*.

(1.) All the Members of *Christ's Mystical Body*, should pay a *due Honour* to their glorious *Head*. It is owing to him, and his distinguishing and unmerited *Grace*, that they are taken into that *spiritual Relation* which I have been describing; to *Influences* deriv'd from him, their *spiritual Life* is to be ascribed; by the same *Influences* that *Life* is preserved and maintained; and to him they are indebted for *Eternal Life* too: So that the infinite *Perfections* of his *Nature*, and the *Obligations* they are under to him, call for their highest *Regards*, and the greatest *Honours* they are capable of paying him.

All *Christians* should, therefore, love *Jesus Christ* in *Sincerity*, receive him as their *Saviour* and *Lord*; depend upon him for the *Supply* of their *Wants*, for *Direction* in all their *Difficulties*, for *Success* against, and *Victory* over their *Spiritual Enemies*, and for all that *Grace* which they stand in need of. And because his *Example* is most worthy of *Imitation*, and his *Authority* to govern the *World*, and especially the *Church*, is not to be called in question; their *Tempers* and *Lives* should be like his, and to him they should be universally obedient. Thus should
all

all the Members of Christ's Mystical Body honour their glorious Head.

(2.) It is the Duty of such to be heartily concerned for the Welfare of that Church of which they are Members. If the Interest of Christ prospers in the World, if practical Religion gains Ground; if an Addition be made to the Number of his faithful Followers, and the Kingdom of our Redeemer appears to be in a more flourishing State than formerly, and grows more extensive; this should be matter of the greatest Joy to all his Disciples. But on the other hand, if serious Piety languishes, if Brotherly-Love grows cold, and divine Charity seems to be dying; if the Truths of the Gospel are deny'd by some, and betray'd by others, and there be a falling away either into Immorality, or dangerous Errors; if such Things as these make the Church appear with a melancholy Face; this should affect and grieve the true Members of it more than any Afflictions of their own. For this Church they should always be earnest and importunate Petitioners; and when they go to the Throne of Grace to beg Mercy for themselves, the Peace and Prosperity of *Jerusalem* should never be forgotten. To all which Instances of Concern, give me leave to take notice of another, and that is, That all the Members of this holy Catholick Church, should faithfully improve the several Talents with which God

has intrusted them, by promoting, in their several Stations, and according to their Abilities, the Interest and Kingdom of Christ in the World.

(3.) It is the Duty, and ought to be the Study and Endeavour of all Christians, to carry it to one another as Fellow-Members of the same *Mystical Body*. As they should sincerely desire each other's Welfare, and express the greatest Delight and Satisfaction in it; so when any Disciple of Jesus Christ is in Distress and Affliction, the rest ought to discover a most affectionate Commiseration, and the tenderest Sympathy: according to the Advice of the Apostle, who bids us re-
 Rom. xii. *joice with them that rejoice, and weep with them*
 15. *that weep.* And seeing they are all Children of the same Father, bear the same heavenly Image, and are influenced by the same Spirit; their Love should be cordial, and without Dissimulation, and strong enough to prompt them to exert themselves in doing all the Good they can for one another, and that with regard to this World and the next. And because some of all Denominations among Christians may be (and I have the Charity to believe are) *Members of Christ's Body*, the mutual Love, which I am speaking of, should not be confin'd to those of any one Persuasion, but extend itself to *all* Christ's Disciples. Our Religion, indeed, obliges us
 to

to love our very Enemies, and without doubt we ought so to do ; but wherever we see the Image of God, such Persons, how much soever they may differ from us, should be particularly dear to us. Thus should the Members of Christ's Mystical Body love one another, and this Love of theirs should be productive of, and attended with Unity and Peace.

It was our Lord's Charge to his Disciples, and what he frequently repeated, that they should *love one another*. The Apostle exhorts Joh. xv. Christians to *put away all Bitterness, Anger, and* ^{12, 17.} *Clamour, and Evil-speaking, and all Malice* : Ephes. iv. and indeed he never seems to deliver himself ^{31.} in a more pathetical Strain, than when he is pressing this Duty. How moving is his Language to the *Philippians* ! *If there be therefore any Consolation in Christ, if any Comfort of* ^{Philip. ii.} *Love, if any Fellowship of the Spirit, fulfil ye my* ^{1, 2.} *Joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same Love, being of one Accord, of one Mind.*

And, O ! how happy would it be for Families and Societies, for Towns, Cities, and Kingdoms, and the Church in general, if Christians would attend to these Advices ! Discord would then be a Stranger among us, and Animosities cease. How would Religion thrive in the midst of such a Catholick and Extensive Charity ! Its Beauties would then captivate Standers-by, and gain them

to be its Votaries; the Weak would have a great Stumbling-Block removed out of their Way; and Unbelievers, observing the Excellency of Christianity, that it was able to keep the Passions of Men in Subjection, and to suppress those angry Resentments which Nature could not pretend to master, would not be able to withstand the irresistible Charms of such an Institution, but fall in with it, as a Scheme admirably contrived, becoming the Perfections of its great, wise, and good Author, and calculated, in every respect, to promote the Happiness of Mankind.

Thus I have pointed out the Duties which the Members of Christ's Mystical Body owe to their *glorious Head*, to the *Church*, and to *one another*. These are Things in which all of us are very nearly concerned; and therefore I would earnestly recommend them to all, and more especially to you who have erected this Place for the Worship of God, and design for the future to assemble here for that purpose.

I am very sensible that your Conduct in the Step which you have now taken, is, and will be animadverted on with some Severity; and that your *Separation* from the *Establishment* will be thought by some highly culpable, and call'd by very hard Names. But as far as I am capable of judging, what you have done will admit of a very just Defence; and I hope

our

our *Brethren* of the *Church of England*, (for so we will beg leave to speak of, and account them) will consider what you have to offer in your *Vindication*, before they proceed to censure and condemn you.

The Principles which you go upon (if I know any thing of them) are such as these.

As *Christians* and *Protestants*, you take the *Bible* to be the *only Rule* of your *Faith*, *Practice*, and *Worship*; and believe (according to the sixth *Article* of the *Church of England*) that the *Holy Scripture* containeth all things necessary to *Salvation*: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any Man, that it should be believed as an *Article of Faith*, or be thought requisite or necessary to *Salvation*.

You demand it as your Right, to read the *Scriptures*, which you must take for your *Rule*, and to judge for yourselves, what *Articles* of *Faith* these *Scriptures* contain, and what *Directions* they give you for ordering your *Practice* and *Worship*.

You reckon (and very justly) that your Souls are your own, that you must be accountable to God, at the *Day of Judgment*, for the Care you have taken of them; and that the *Business* of *Salvation* being of the greatest Consequence, if you do not pursue those *Methods*, which, upon the most serious *Deliberation*, you believe will have the most effectual

effectual Tendency to promote, and secure your everlasting Welfare and Happiness; you shall be guilty of an inexcusable Neglect, and such as you cannot justify, either to God, or your own Consciences.

You have (I take it for granted) examined the Word of God, with an Integrity becoming Christians, and sincere Enquirers after Truth; and are convinc'd, I suppose, that the Way of Worship which you have now made choice of, (having none of those *Ceremonies* in it which are of *Human Invention*, and allowing you a *Right* to all *Gospel-Ordinances*, upon the *naked Terms*, on which Christ hath left them to Mankind) is more agreeable to the *Simplicity* of the *Gospel*, and more consistent with the *Liberty* wherein Christ hath made you free, than the Worship of the Church by *Law Establish'd*. And, upon consulting Experience, you find, I presume, that the Service of God among those *Protestant Dissenters*, whose Method you approve, is perform'd more to your Spiritual Edification, Advantage, and Comfort, than in any other way. Upon this Conviction, you think yourselves obliged to chuse, as you have now done. And the same Authority, by which the *Church of England* has her Establishment, having allowed you to make choice of such a Minister for yourselves, as you think will be most serviceable to you, and to worship God
in

in a way that is most agreeable to the Dictates of your Consciences ; you have, I think, only exerted that *Right* which the *Law of Nature*, the *Law of Christ*, and the *Law of the Nation* have all given you ; and therefore done no more than you can justify to God and the World.

As to the *substantial* Parts of your Religion, they are the same as before. You worship the *same God* with our Brethren of the *Establishment* ; believe in the *same Saviour*, and expect all your Assistances, Supports, and Comforts from the *same ever-blessed Spirit* : To the Service of this *Sacred and Eternal Trinity*, you desire to devote yourselves ; you profess the *same Faith*, walk by the *same Rule*, own the *same Sacraments*, and declare yourselves bound to the *same Heaven*, in the *same and only way of Holiness and Obedience*. To which I add, that you ought to be, and I hope are, one with our Brethren in *Love and Affection*. As they cannot therefore charge you either with *Apostacy* or *Heresy*, so, should they be so angry as to lay the Guilt of *Schism* at your door, they will find the utmost difficulty to make it appear, that they have not wrong'd you by so doing.

In short, I am fully persuaded, that if you have proceeded on the Principles before-mentioned, you have acted a part which you will
never

never have any reason to repent of; and therefore let nothing discourage you.

As to the *Place* which you have built for *Divine Service*, it is very decent and commodious; and if you enjoy the *Divine Presence* in it, I dare say you will not like it the worse, because it wants the Formality of an *Episcopal Consecration*. Under the Gospel, the *Distinction of Places* is undoubtedly at an end.

Joh. iv. 21, *The Hour cometh* (says our Blessed Saviour to
23. the Woman of Samaria) *when ye shall, neither*

in this Mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father; but the true Worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. And the great Master of Assemblies has been graciously

Mat. xviii. pleas'd to declare, *Where two or three are ga-*
20. *thered together in my Name, there am I in the*

midst of them. The Holiness of Places set apart for the stated Worship of God, "is
" nothing else but their actual Separation,
" or Appointment to a Religious Use." And the Consecration of such Places, however perform'd, can add nothing to the Acceptance of the Services which are perform'd in them. I know that a great Advocate for the Church of England, would have it manifest, that the very Majesty and Holiness of the Place, where God is worshipped, hath, in regard of us, great Virtue, Force, and Efficacy; for that it serveth as a sensible Help to stir up Devotion, and, in
that

that respect, bettereth no doubt even our holiest and best Actions in this kind *. But, as far as I can see, this spiritual Virtue which is imagin'd to be the Result of a formal Consecration, "is (as one observes) a mere Fiction, because God has no where promised to put such Virtues in things consecrated by mere Human Appointment. Our Devotions are truly excited by Means ordain'd of God; such are the Word, Sacraments, and Prayer, to which God has promised his Blessing. Things arbitrarily consecrated by the Wisdom of Men, may affect superstitious Minds; but a Mind truly pious, is moved to Devotion by the Consideration of the Divine Character of Holy Ordinances, and the Special Presence of God with them †.

If you have therefore sincere and good Ends in what you have done, and can appeal to that God who knows the Secrets of your Hearts, and to whom you must be accountable for this, and all the rest of your Management; that your Separation from the Establish'd Church, is not the Effect of Rashness and Inconsideration, of Peevishness or Prejudice, of Pride or Vain-glory, or any

* Hooker's Eccles. Pol. Book 3. Sect. 16.

† Owen's Hist. of the Consecrat. of Churches, &c. p. 94.

The Nature and Extent

Views which, in the Judgment of Charity, can be esteem'd *criminal*; but that you sincerely desire to keep close to your *Bibles*, and to act according to the Word of God, and the Dictates of your Consciences, and have nothing so much at heart as the Honour of your Redeemer, and your own eternal Welfare; you may expect to have God with you.

And now let me exhort you, in the Name of our great Lord and Master; let me beseech and entreat you, as you profess to be his Disciples and Followers, and would be thought to have a sincere Concern for his Interest and Glory in the World; yea, let me, by Authority from him, give it in charge to you, to live up to the Dignity of the Christian Profession and Character; and by the Holiness and Purity of your Conversations, *adorn the Doctrine of God your Saviour in all things*. Study to keep Consciences void of Offence towards God and Men. Let your *strict Justice*, in the Management of your Trades and worldly Employments, your *Truth and Sincerity* in all your Words and Actions; your *peaceable Temper* and Behaviour, your *Courteousness and Affability*, your *Humility and Condescension*, your *Love and Charity*, and Forwardness to do Good, as you have Opportunity; let your *Temperance and Chastity*, your *Heavenly-Mindedness* and

and Contempt of this World, your Reverence of God's Holy Name, and conscientious Observation of the Day which he has ordered you to Sanctify, your religious Behaviour in your several Families, your Faithfulness in every Relation, your inviolable Attachment to the Interest of your Country, and steady and unshaken Zeal for his Most Excellent Majesty King GEORGE, and the Protestant Succession in his Illustrious House: Let such things as these (I say) be an Evidence to all that observe your good Conversations, that your Religion is *more than a Name*, and that you are *in earnest* in what you profess. If ever there was need of good Examples, I am sure there is now: Let your Behaviour therefore be as becometh Holiness, that the Word of God may not be blasphemed; but others may, by your good Works which they behold, ¹ Pet. iii. glorify God in the Day of Visitation. ^{12.}

Such, my Brethren, let your Conversations be, and then you will have no reason to be moved at any of the Reproaches which you may meet with. You know very well that it has been the Lot of good Persons, in all Ages, to meet with ill Treatment. Our Blessed Saviour himself could not escape the Revilings of malicious Tongues. When St. Paul, with Silas his Companion, came to preach the Gospel at Thessalonica, they were charged with being Disturbers of the

publick Peace; and the unbelieving Jew
 A&C. xvii. raised this Outcry upon the Occasion: *These*
 6. *that have turn'd the World upside down are come*
hither also. So that you must not be surprized
 if you hear yourselves reflected on.

Bear, my Brethren, every Insult with
 Courage and Meekness of Spirit, and esteem
 the Reproach of Christ as your Glory and
 Crown. If any shew themselves to be of a
 spiteful Temper, look upon such as Objects of
 Pity, and pray that God would give them a
 Phil. ii. 5. Frame more suitable to the Gospel of Peace,
 and that the same Mind may be in them, as
 1 Pet. iii. was in Christ Jesus. Render not *Evil for*
 9. *Evil, or Railing for Railing.* Bless them that
 curse you, and requite the most unkind Usages,
 with all the Offices of Love and Friendship
 that are in your power; and let the Words
 of our Saviour be your Comfort, whatever
 Mat. v. 41. you may meet with: *Blessed are ye when Men*
 12. *shall revile you, and say all manner of Evil*
against you falsely for my sake; rejoice and be ex-
ceeding glad, for great is your Reward in Heaven.
Schismatics, Hypocrites, Peace-breakers, Fana-
ticks, and the like, are Words which have no
pleasing Sound; and if you should at any
time be saluted with them, they may perhaps
give you some Uneasiness: but keep a good
Conscience, and after you have made such a
calm Reply to your uncharitable Accusers,
as the Credit of Religion, and your own in-
 injured

jured Characters call for, leave the full Answer to all the Charges which may be brought against you, and the final Decision of all Differences, to that equitable Judge, before whom you, such angry Brethren, and all Mankind, must shortly appear. The *last Judgment*, you may depend upon it, will set all things right: In the mean time *be patient*, for ^{James v. 8.} *the Coming of the Lord draweth nigh.*

And now, Brethren, *I commend you to God, and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to* ^{Acts xx. 32.} *build you up, and to give you an Inheritance among all them which are sanctified. May he,* ^{1 Pet. v. 10.} *by the Influences of his Holy Spirit, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. May all the Sermons which shall hereafter be preach'd in this Place, be attended with God's Blessing, and may the Word of Life have glorious Success: May all the pious Prayers which you shall from time to time join in, be heard and answer'd: May your Praises be accepted, and the Sacraments which Christ has instituted in the Church, be faithfully improved, and made profitable and saving. May Peace be within these Walls, and Prosperity wait on all your solemn Assemblies; and may all of us be found living Members of Christ's Mystical Body; that being, by Faith, united to him now, we may hereafter be admitted into his Presence and Kingdom, and spend an Eternity with him.*

To

To Him, to the Father, and the Ever-Blessed Spirit of Grace and Truth, Three Persons, and one Glorious, Incomprehensible, and Eternal God, be the highest Honours paid by Saints and Angels, now and for ever. *Amen*

F I N I S.

Just Published,

I. Thirteen Sermons concerning the Doctrine of the TRINITY. Preach'd at the Merchant's-Lecture, at *Salters-Hall*. Together with a Vindication of that celebrated Text, *1 John v. 7.* from being spurious; and an Explication of it, upon the Supposition of its being Genuine: In Four Sermons, preach'd at the same Lecture, *Ann. 1719, 1720.* By the Reverend EDMUND CALAMY D. D. Price 5s.

II. An Essay towards a Practical ENGLISH GRAMMAR, describing the Genius and Nature of the *English* Tongue. Giving likewise a rational and plain Account of Grammar in general; with a familiar Explanation of its Terms. By Mr. JAMES GREENWOOD, School-Master of *St. Paul's* School. The Second Edition, very much improved. To which is added an *English* Profody, by Mr. Dennis, 12mo. Price 2s. 6d.

BOTH printed for JOHN CLARK, in the Poultry.